



ONLINE SUBMITTAL

Hearing on Tuesday, March 23, 2021 @ 9:00 a.m.

Videoconference

**DATE:** March 20, 2021

**TO:** Committee on Health, Human Services and Homelessness  
Rep. Ryan Yamane, Chair  
Rep. Adrian Tam, Vice Chair

**FROM:** Eva Andrade, President

**RE:** Strong Support for HR57 Designating September as National Suicide Prevention and Action Month

Hawaii Family Forum is a non-profit, pro-family education organization committed to preserving and strengthening life, family and religious freedom in Hawaii. We support this bill that establishes a National Suicide Prevention and Action Month.

Many people in our community are concerned about suicide, because it affects the vulnerable people in our community, especially our youth and elderly. We applaud the hard work of professionals in the community who are working hard to ensure the safety and wellbeing of community members who are experiencing a mental health crisis. In fact, several of our pastors have dealt with mental health and suicide issues over the course of the past year.

In their 2020 Report, the United Health Foundation reported<sup>1</sup> two issues of concern with respect to Hawaii: Income inequality increased 12% between 2007 and 2019 from 3.88 to 4.36 and frequent mental distress increased 31% between 2011 and 2019 from 8.5% to 11.1% of adults. These statistics should concern all of us.

Experts rightly point out that suicidal behaviors, for people of any age, are usually rooted in many different factors, with mental health issues playing an important role in the overall mix. It is a "perfect storm" of emotional issues and the only way to begin making a difference, is by identifying and treating each person.

As we work together to improve education, awareness, support services, and outreach, we believe that the members of our community who are at risk will find hope, healing and support.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in strong support.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.americashealthrankings.org/learn/reports/2020-annual-report/state-summaries-hawaii> (accessed March 20, 2021)

**HR-57**

Submitted on: 3/22/2021 3:14:10 PM

Testimony for HHH on 3/23/2021 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Deborah Goebert	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Suicide is a leading cause of injury death in Hawaii with one loss of life every two days. These losses continue to have a rippling effect across the state. There are nearly 2 hospitalizations per day and many more individuals that consider suicide. Suicide prevention efforts bring community members together with common purpose. For the last several years, Hawaii has taken part in statewide prevention efforts to reduce suicide during the month of September. Such prioritization helps to decrease stigma and reinvigorate the community. I encourage you to pass this measure.